



Participatory Campaign Approaches in Greening Africa: A Case of 93.1 IUIU FM Go Green Tree Planting Campaign

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INTRODUCTION

For the first time in human history, the world is collectively energized towards responding to climate change threats. In the United States,

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numerous tree planting campaigns have been initiated to foster “environmental and health benefits” (Pincetl et al., 2013). Across urban environments that are continuously faced with the increased population residing in cities (Cohen, 2003; Pincetl, 2010). According to Pincetl (2010), the increased population in cities has resulted in most of the global and regional “environmental problems” (p. 227), such as increased human activities, exported emissions and waste. However, tree planting in urban environments has contributed to a vital infrastructure in helping cities respond to their environmental impacts (Pincetl, 2010).

On the other hand, Africa continues to pose a global threat of unpreparedness and exhibits the highest level of vulnerability to climate change effects. In their study, Conway and Schipperc (2011) identified the challenges and opportunities in addressing climate risks in Africa, and connoted the importance of “social protection programs” (p. 228) as a mitigation approach to the large-scale droughts in Ethiopia. The introduced social protection programs provided basic necessities to the vulnerable social strata in the form of food, cash, inputs and assets. However, in Sub-Saharan countries, its rich green cover increasingly disappeared in countries such as Uganda. The cause of Uganda’s disappearing forests is increasingly attributed to “demand for fuelwood, wood products and environmental degradation” (Hamilton, 1987).

In response to the global crisis, we adopted a participatory approach in fostering tree planting and livelihood enhancement in different communities in Africa, in particular, Uganda. The adopted participatory approach explored institutionalized efforts at both greening Uganda and enhancing its communities’ livelihoods. In context, this study evidences the participatory approach used by the Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU) community radio in their campaign dubbed the *93.1 Go Green Tree Planting Campaign* that aimed at achieving 93.1% of tree planting across different regions of Uganda to enhance livelihoods—encourage the

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planting of commercial trees and fruit trees such as mangoes, oranges, apples, guavas and avocado.

Using IUIU-FM, a community radio station located in the Eastern Region of the country, multiple participatory approaches such as community sensitization through radio program “Know Your Environment”, community thought that was achieved through trainings and mobilization of households and community ambassadors were used to realize the campaign’s objectives. The greening campaign attracted several stakeholders, in particular, students studying Environmental Journalism, IUIU-FM staff and lecturers of IUIU Mass Communication Department, IUIU administration, government institutions and varied IUIU-FM listenership communities.

A total of 13,100 tree seedlings of different species were collected from listeners and re-distributed to diverse communities. Over 4,100 *Milicia excelsa* (*Mvule*) endangered tree species were institutionally grown and distributed to listeners. The tree planting campaign was however limited by constricted coverage of IUIU-FM within the radius of 40–50 km; inadequate funding and fluctuating weather conditions retarded the growth of seedlings.

THE PARTICIPATORY APPROACH CAMPAIGNS

In bridging the gap between different stakeholders amidst a looming climate change crisis, participatory approach campaigns are increasingly being adopted globally to foster collective involvement towards making the world a better place. Although some attempts have been made to assimilate stakeholders into environmental life cycle assessments, there is generally no consensual normative approach (Mathe, 2014).

However, Mathe (2014) further notes that the integration of a participatory approach into Social Life Cycle Assessment (SLCA)—in the context of the environment fosters plurality of stakeholders’ interests, local knowledge and it equally promotes dialogue among communities in realization of a common objective such as tree planting that fosters individual and community livelihoods.

Therefore, in adoption of a participatory approach that advances community involvement at both individual and organizational levels, we are guided by theoretical assumptions of connective and collective actions—scholarly referred to as the logic of collective action. According to Bennett and Segerberg (2012), the logic of collective action advances

the involvement of individuals and organizations to contribute to the collective endeavor attainable through a common cause—in the context of this study, the collective action under consideration is tree planting.

In addition, scholars of connective and collective action connote the need for citizens to make difficult choices to form and adopt self-changing social identities on which they personalize action frames to realize a common cause (Bennett et al., 2012, Kasadha, 2018, Kasadha 2020a, b). These action frames are often symbolic and are universally adoptable.

Notwithstanding that existing studies that advance connective and collective actions are based on digital platforms—we primarily focused on connective and collective actions resulting from the use of a community-based radio station that uses its air frequency to broadcast an environmental program that reaches out to thousands of listeners. These listeners are mobilized to take part in an environmental activity, in particular, tree planting to foster livelihoods and also as a response to the global climate change crisis that poses a greater threat to “Africa” (Conway & Schipperc, 2011). Thus, the use of community radio as a medium for the participatory approach campaign in the *93.1 Go Green Tree Planting Campaign* in Uganda.

Community Radio and Participatory Campaign

Scholars have deduced the importance of traditional media—particularly, the radio medium as the most essential medium for sustainable development and social change (Gumucio, 2001). Although, there is an increased proportion of online engagements in Africa (International Telecommunication Union, 2012), radio programming and messaging remain the most preferred medium—its “local, pervasive, flexible, extensive, personal, available, efficient, readily understood, portable, and speedy” (Manyozo, 2009).

Given that radio medium remains the most preferred source of information in Uganda (Kasadha, 2020a), this study examines its use in Africa’s institutionalized greening campaigns—particularly, at the Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU) community radio’s tree planting campaign that aimed at reinvigorating community participation given media’s powerful effects. Media scholars have deduced the powerful effects of media in influencing “how people rank and think about different issues” (Baran & Davis, 2010; Kasadha & Kantono, 2021). Although the powerful effects notion of the media is challenged by contemporary media

scholars, it's clear that media especially radio remains an influential vehicle for development communication in Africa and other emerging economies.

As a result, existing literature evidence the importance of using radio messaging or programming in participatory campaigns as one that can have a direct impact on the perception of individuals—thus enhancing their understanding of a range of business-related issues (Anderson & Elliott, 2007). In context, radio messaging or programming on efforts to plant trees fosters communities being connected to sharing a common message—leading to collective action.

Although we primarily focus on the collective action of tree planting, numerous studies have evidenced the importance of radio medium in participatory campaigns globally—as noted in the fifty account experiments on the use of radio waves to empower people living in poor communities in “Africa, Asia and Latin America” (Gumucio, 2001). In addition, the use of radio medium further boosted livelihoods of tobacco farmers in rural communities (Anderson & Elliott, 2007). In both cases of Gumucio (2001) and Anderson and Elliott (2007), their studies demonstrate the immense ability of the radio medium to enhance people's livelihoods.

In Africa, there are numerous studies that have advanced the importance of radio medium in enhancing community livelihoods based on a participatory approach in initiated campaigns—among the people of Tolon-Kumbungu in Ghana (Al-hassan et al., 2011), Kaduna State in Nigeria (Alhassan & Shehu, 2018), and in the Fanteakwa District of Ghana (Asuman & Diedong, 2019). In the context of Uganda, the radio use fostered the mobilization of communities in campaigns aimed at stopping the Ugandan government's efforts of giving away part of Uganda's biggest natural forest to Metha Group for Sugarcane plantations (Nassanga, 2009). Thus, this study's participatory approach campaign dubbed the *93.1 Go Green Tree Planting Campaign*.

In this chapter, we present a practical case of use of participatory communication approach in Africa's institutionalized greening campaigns. Our case story is centered on the IUIU community radio's *93.1 Go Green Tree Planting Campaign* approach in reinvigorating community participation in tree planting drive. The greening campaign of tree planting aimed at enhancing livelihoods of the listeners within the radius of the community radio, the surrounding regions such as Karamoja and Busoga.

The 93.1 Go Green Tree Planting Campaign

The *93.1 Go Green Tree Planting Campaign* aimed at enhancing livelihoods of the listeners within the radius of the community radio through tree planting based on the weekly aired environmental program. The campaign was initiated to enable students studying Environmental Journalism to have hands-on experience in responding to societal and environmental challenges—in particular, is aimed at teaching students how they would effectively communicate environmental messages that impacted on society and enhanced the livelihoods of the different communities.

Aired on the Islamic University in Uganda's 93.1 IUIU FM, the campaign adopted a target of 93.1% of every community household to engage in tree planting activities. The weekly aired environmental program aimed at changing mindsets on Environment and Natural Resource Management through tree planting.

The campaign targeted regions of Karamoja, Teso, Bugisu and Busoga. A total of one million seedlings were to be distributed in the aforementioned regions starting in May 2015. The *93.1 Go Green Tree Planting Campaign* was guided by four themes: My Tree Your Tree, Community Empowerment, Communication Sensitization and Response to Malnutrition—these constituted the campaign's objectives:

- i. To encourage and sensitize communities into a tree planting habit (My Tree Your Tree) for environmental conservation and to improve livelihoods.
- ii. To create awareness of the socio-economic and ecological values of trees and improve the demographic profile of tree planting communities (Community Empowerment).
- iii. To bridge the gap between policymakers and communities in decision-making process for resource use and management (Communication Sensitization).
- iv. To educate and sensitize community on a clean and healthy environment (Response to Malnutrition).

In context, the involvement of the community in tree planting campaign is in line with the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters [AMARC] report (2003) given that community media allows participation of local communities in programs' content development, distribution and management (see Table 12.1). As shown in Table

Table 12.1 An extract of the 2014–2015 Program format of the 93.1 IUIU FM Sunday program *Know Your Environment*

<i>Time</i>	<i>Stakeholder Roles</i>	<i>Objective(s)</i>
6:00–6:05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program jingles (Intro) • Introduce guests in the studio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let the audience know the program has started • Remind the audience of the host and guest's identity
6:06–6:10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guests introduce themselves • Introduce the day's topic for discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let the audience know the program has started
6:10–6:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open discussions in relation to the topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate and inform the public in relation to the topic of discussion
6:30–6:40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Skit played (Skit is in line with the topic of discussion) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To entertain, inform and educate the listeners
6:40–7:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prog Mid jingle • Open lines for callers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To involve the communities in the ongoing discussions
7:01–7:20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Thoughts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To play audio recordings of the community in relation to the topic discussed • To encourage different opinion leaders to reach out to their communities and sensitize them about environmental issues
7:21–7:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recap on the Community thoughts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To discuss the thoughts of the community reached out to
7:40–7:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental News (Recap on what was in news in relation to the environment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To find out how much is reported about the environment in the available media channels in the country

(continued)

Table 12.1 (continued)

<i>Time</i>	<i>Stakeholder Roles</i>	<i>Objective(s)</i>
7:45–7:50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 93.1 Go Green Tree Planting Campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To encourage the communities to plant trees • To achieve 93.1% of the population planting trees in all reached out to communities • Teach society the value of “My environment your environment” • “My tree, your tree” • To successfully brand everyone as an Environment Ambassador
7:51–7:58	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlights of discussed topic’s major issues • Highlights of Community thoughts • Reminder on 93.1 Go Green Campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To remind the listeners on topical issues discussed
7:58–8:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind the audience of next week’s topical discussion

12.1, community radio permits a more broad-based involvement of the ordinary people in discussions of local matters and finding simple solutions to their problems—in context of this study, it's the involvement of the communities in discussing environmental topical issues.

As Gaynor and O'Brien (2017) connote that community radio has the ability to unravel the diverse potentials of the audience—making the radio's listenership participating agents rather than being reduced to mere recipients of the messages at the end of the communication loop, the 93.1 IUIU FM's weekly environmental program as shown in Table 12.1 evidences that the listeners actively participated and contributed to the realization of the *93.1 Go Green Tree Planting Campaign*.

Thus, the program's approach to involving listeners evidenced what Gumucio (2001) referred to as essentials for any successful participatory communication. These essentials included: their active participation in the process of social change, ownership of the future through dialogue and democratic participation in the planning of communication activities, adequate time for the people to appreciate their concerns, collective execution of the activities in the interest of the majority, clarity of scope or target community and deep understanding about social reality, problems and solutions.

Most notably, the aforementioned essentials in the realization of the *93.1 Go Green Tree Planting Campaign* were easily attained given the professionalism exhibited by the radio staff—given that 93.1 IUIU FM is a community radio owned by the Islamic University in Uganda and managed by the Mass Communication department. Unlike other conventional community radios that are managed by the informal community members, IUIU-FM is operated by professionals attached to an academic department. This case you are about to read in this chapter is, therefore, unique, because it combines both industry and academia experiences. The authors, by 2015, were teaching Mass Communication as well as producing and presenting programs at the mentioned community radio station.

THE COMMUNITY'S PARTICIPATION APPROACH

The *93.1 Go Green Tree Planting Campaign* adopted a range of techniques to foster community participation in the tree planting campaign that targeted the regions of Karamoja, Teso, Bugisu and Busoga. The

distributed seedlings were voluntary contributions from the radio’s listenership (see Fig. 12.1)—these also contributed and took part in starting a nursery bed for the radio station where most of the distributed seedlings were kept, and grown before being distributed to different communities (see Fig. 12.2).

In connecting the campaign’s different stakeholders, a three-phase participatory approach was adopted—this fostered both the individuals and organizations to participate in the campaign. The three-phase implementation participatory approach consisted of:

- i. The Media (Radio Stations for Communication sensitization)
- ii. Community Thought (To educate, inform and entertain communities)
- iii. Community Ambassador ID (Empowerment & Sense of responsibility).

The Media (Radio Stations) was identified as the first phase of the 93.1 Go Green Tree Planting Campaign. In this, the Islamic University in Uganda’s community radio station 93.1 IUIU FM hosted and aired the weekly environment program (see Table 12.1). And also trained students pursuing an Environment Science degree program on the basic aspects of Environmental Journalism. The training also consisted of the radio’s



Fig. 12.1 L-R: IUIU FM Station Manager receiving tree seedling donation from the Cadet Ssal Lule Michael on behalf of the Uganda Police Force (UPF). Go Green Ambassadors offload tree seedlings received from Uganda Wild Life Authority (Photos by Mass Communication Department)



Fig. 12.2 IUIU FM Nursery bed. Students of Environmental Science taking care of grown seedlings to be distributed. Radio staff waters the grown Mvule tree seedlings [*Milicia excelsa*] (Photos by Mass Communication Department and Daniel Edyegu)

listenership communities being trained in the best Agricultural practices given that Uganda is largely an agricultural economy. Thus, being able to organize and train the radio's listenership in better agricultural practices created better avenues for training communities on the best tree planting practices. The agricultural training enabled the radio station to equally sensitize the beneficiaries on the importance of fruit trees in their homesteads (see Fig. 12.3).

As a result, 93.1 IUIU FM's direct involvement with both the University student community that engaged in planting the seedlings and the listenership community that constituted the radio's audience, created a linkage in different stakeholders (radio, students, listeners) in actively taking a role in the tree planting activities—these also contributed what was distributed to others thus evidencing a sense of collective action towards shared common goals of mitigating the global climate crisis threats. More specifically, the use of media, boosted the realization of the campaign's four objectives listed below:



Fig. 12.3 IUIU FM invited experts to train the radio listeners on the agricultural practices that are environmentally friendly. Those trained are also given fruit seedlings to plant in their respective gardens (Photos by Mass Communication Department and Mwambu Joseph)

- i. Bottom-up development (Community Empowerment).
- ii. Grass-root involvement (Community Thought & IDs).
- iii. Participatory decision-making (Community Empowerment).
- iv. Indigenous Knowledge and Media (Media as a channel for bettering our society through appreciating the people's thoughts and views).
- v. For interpersonal trust, interactivity and coalition building.

The second phase of *Community Thought* as shown in Table 12.1 consisted of a segment run in the Environmental Program on radio in which views and ideas of the community were aired to the 93.1 IUIU FM's listeners for discussion. These generated call-ins to discuss what others had suggested or proposed in their shared thoughts. The *Community Thought* phase is basically an interactive session through which the community was involved in a discussion—the discussions were often off the air and, in some cases, they were live discussions initiated at the radio's different community outreaches (see Fig. 12.4). In this phase, the shared thoughts of the community were often responded to by the invited experts that addressed the raised concerns. The *community thought* discussions were participatory, dialectical and organizational:



Fig. 12.4 Outreach team engages the Communities in Live broadcast of the Environmental Program. Communities participated in discussions and hosts at the studio answered all additional environmental queries. Each outreach had an Expert that responded to immediate environmental concerns of the communities. (Photo by Mass Communication Department)

- i. Participatory will create avenues for interaction with the Communities. In a bid to involve people to participate in the development of their region.
- ii. Dialectical creates a better understanding between the We the campaigners and the receiving Communities. In this case, contradictions and Complementarity exist but it's through the Community Thought Forum that a common ground is reached in a bid to better livelihoods.
- iii. Organizational change results from our value and respect for our environment. There is a need to change our behaviors either intentionally or unintentionally if our environment is to be preserved and if livelihoods are to be bettered.

Lastly, *Community Ambassador ID*. In this phase, we identified popular individuals among different targeted communities. These were democratically chosen by the different communities that benefited from the *93.1 Go Green Tree Planting Campaign*. These were literally popular persons that exhibited an influential ability in shaping and guiding the communities into a collective action of tree planting. In carrying out the campaign, the selected *Community Ambassadors* exhibited abilities of decision-making based on which community they represented. The *Community Ambassador ID* was non-discriminatory—the campaign also adopted and branded all school-going pupils/students as Student Ambassadors so as to encourage the school-going children to protect and preserve their surrounding environment. The students whose seedlings would have grown after two years would be supported academically (depending on the availability of funds) and given a tour to a destination of their choice to discuss the environmental aspects (subject to availability of funds).

The three-phase participatory approach was based on five assumptions. It was these assumptions that guided the campaign in defining the relevant stakeholders and their distinct responsibilities as shown in Table 12.2. These assumptions that guided the *93.1 Go Green Tree Planting Campaign's* implementation three-phases are listed right below Table 12.2:

- i. The targeted communities are willing to donate land on which the seedlings will be planted.
- ii. The communities will appreciate the economic benefits attached to the planting of trees in the period of two years.
- iii. The trees once planted will act as border marks to solve land wrangles in different regions of Bugisu, Busoga, Teso and Karamoja.
- iv. In the mountainous regions, the planted trees will help in mitigating issues of landslides and mud flows.
- v. There will be organizational change for better development.

RESULTS

The *93.1 Go Green Tree Planting Campaign* as shown in Table 12.3, a total of 13,100 seedlings were collected and re-distributed to targeted communities. However, the endangered *Milicia excelsa* (Mvule) seedlings

Table 12.2 Campaign stakeholders and their roles

<i>Stakeholders</i>	<i>Roles</i>
93.1 UIIU FM	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To solicit and account for seedlings that will be planted in the course of the project 2. To solicit and account for any funds received in the implementation of the project 3. To prepare and design the communication strategy that best suits the communities to better livelihoods 4. To ensure that the recordings from discussions held with communities are packaged into audio documentaries that will be supplied to the communities after the discussions 5. To train the different radio stations on basic aspects of Environmental Journalism that will be incorporated in the course of the campaign 6. To fully involve University students in sensitizing the communities on environmental- and developmental-related aspects in line with the project 7. To monitor and coordinate the whole process of planting trees in the regions with support from the sponsors 8. To liaise with different sponsors in the implementation of their goals and objectives in line with the project aims 9. To quarterly report to sponsors on the progress of the project <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To be the custodians for the seedlings supplied for planting 2. To offer land on which the tree seedlings shall be planted 3. To maintain, manage, and monitor the seedlings to ensure their growth 4. To submit monthly reports on the progress of the planted trees 5. To continuously participate in the Community Thought Segment where they gather and discuss issues regarding the environment 6. To voluntarily participate in good hygienic and sanitary practices
Communities	

(continued)

Table 12.2 (continued)

<i>Stakeholders</i>	<i>Roles</i>
Funders	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide the project with seedlings 2. To facilitate the training of media houses in the implementation of the project 3. To logistically facilitate the program in its outreach activities in tree planting, Community Thought, Community Ambassador ID branding and response to Malnutrition 4. To facilitate the visual-audio documentation of the project in bettering livelihoods 5. To advise project implementers on how best to accomplish the project 6. To facilitate research works (Environment, Media, Malnutrition) in the course of the campaign
Government	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To monitor and liaise with the beneficiaries in ensuring the success of the project 2. To provide necessary support in ensuring the safety of the delivered seedlings and any project supplies 3. To help in the mobilization of the communities benefiting from the project 4. To offer land on which the tree seedlings shall be planted (model farms) 5. To liaise with the communities in maintaining, managing and monitoring the seedlings to ensure progressive growth 6. To participate in the Community Thought Sessions and any organized radio program

Table 12.3 Seedlings distributed (Mvule) and collected and redistributed (others)

<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Seedling type</i>	N
Commercial	<i>Milicia excelsa</i> (Mvule)	4100
Commercial	Eucalyptus	2000
	Grevillea	3000
Commercial and Response to Malnutrition	Mangoes	2000
	Avocado	1200
	Passion	350
	Oranges	1000
	Jackfruit	3000
	Guavas	450
	Apple	100
Total		17,200

Source Authors

were grown in the nursery bed established at the 93.1 IUIU FM radio premises located at the Islamic University in Uganda—a total of 4,100 seedlings were distributed to the beneficiary communities.

My Tree Your Tree Theme

The campaign's first objective of creating awareness on the socio-economic and ecological values of trees encouraging and sensitizing communities into a tree planting habit for environmental conservation and to improve livelihoods was themed *My Tree Your Tree*. The theming enabled the campaign to easily share a message that was often recalled by the targeted communities. Given the scarcity of fruit seedlings in numerous communities within Uganda, the campaign adopted a theme of *My Tree Your Tree* basically to foster community and individual ownership of each seedling that was planted. The essence was to encourage individuals that each tree they planted they owned it and the community as a whole would benefit from the effects of planted trees. In this, the campaign-initiated outreach activities in which they shared with different reached communities on the importance of tree planting and how it would enhance their respective livelihoods that would eventually boost and help in reducing the malnutrition levels since some of the seedlings being planted were fruit seedlings that added numerous nutrients to their diet (see Fig. 12.4).



Fig. 12.5 Community and Student Ambassador ID of the campaign receive seedlings (Photos by Mass Communication Department and Guma Hassan Gumisiriza)

As evidenced in Fig. 12.4, the outreach activities enabled the campaign to further realize the aforementioned *Community Thought* in which the campaign fostered discussions that were participatory, dialectical and organizational. It's at such outreaches that the involved communities identified their ambassadors—these became the Community Ambassadors whose role was to further engage their respective communities into tree planting communities. The ambassadorship attribute was also accorded to school-going children that were interested in tree planting campaigns (see Fig. 12.5).

Community Empowerment

The campaign's objective of creating awareness of the socio-economic and ecological values of trees and improving on the demographic profile of tree planting communities (Community Empowerment) was achieved. It was warmly received by different communities and cultural institutions that appreciated the value attached to sensitizing communities on the importance of tree planting. In Bugisu region where 93.1 UIIU FM is stationed, the cultural institution acknowledged the importance of preserving the endangered tree species such as the *Mvule* trees [*Milicia excelsa*]. In Fig. 12.6, the cultural King of the Bugisu region on receiving the donated *Mvule* seedlings re-echoed the importance of tree planting in societies saying:



Fig. 12.6 L-R A 93.1 IUIU FM representative (L) hands over donated *Mvule* tree seedlings [*Milicia excelsa*] to Bugisu Cultural King Mushikori Bob Saul Kipiro, Umukuuka II (Photo by Kirinya Ayub)

Mvule [*Milicia excelsa*] is getting extinct. As a cultural leader I am ready to work with any organization towards the preservation of our environment. *Mvule* is an endangered tree that we must jointly plant. These endangered tree species play a vital role in today's climate change campaigns. As Bugisu region, we are grateful to have institutions such as IUIU that have initiated and engaged our communities into the global climate change advocacy campaigns.

Mushikori Bob Saul Kipiro the Bugisu cultural leader, Umukuuka II.

In addition, the campaign's third objective of bridging the gap between policymakers and communities in decision-making process for resource use and management. (Communication Sensitization) was equally realized. In Fig. 12.7, the area Member of Parliament was hosted on the community radio where he addressed and responded to numerous community concerns alongside updating the radio's listeners



Fig. 12.7 (L-R) The Mbale Municipality Member of Parliament addressing community concerns. The Legislator later visited the 93.1 Go Green Tree planting campaign nursery bed and showed the Mvule seeds (Photos by Guma Hassan Gumisiriza)

on the ongoing legislative efforts aimed at environmental protection—the legislator from Bugisu region also partially addressed the concerns of communities affected by landslides and mudslides.

LIMITATIONS

First, although the campaign targeted regions such as Karamoja—it was limited by the radio’s area of coverage (frequency reach) as it is with community radios globally. This therefore limited the participatory approach campaigns in the context of effectively communicating with the targeted audiences of the *Go Green Tree Planting Campaign*.

Second, the lack of funding to run the campaign limited its outreach abilities—the campaign was run based on voluntary manpower and donations from well-wishers at individual and organization levels. This grossly affected the projected two-year campaign in which a total of one million seedlings were to be distributed. It also affected follow-up activities that would monitor the growth progress of the distributed seedlings. Equally, due to lack of funding opportunities, the campaign didn’t support student ambassadors academically—these would be supported based on their being able to grow their seedlings over a period of two years.

Third, the unpredictability of the 2015 weather in Uganda derailed nursery bed activities and actual plans of when the seedlings would actually be given out to the benefiting communities—we only started giving

out the seedlings during the rainy season given that communities had not invested in modern farming techniques that foster irrigation techniques. Lastly, the shortage of civic education on the importance of environmental conservation despite the numerous laws in Uganda that protect wetland usage—the campaign was limited in popularizing alternative fruit tree farming or any such trees that would preserve the used wetlands.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Given the threat of climate change globally, there is a need for African governments to interest themselves more in funding environmental-related activities—there is also a need for governments to annually fund environmental civic education to boost awareness campaigns of national and international environmental regulations and protocols. As noted in Semujju (2013) the participatory communication in Africa is still limited by poverty among listenership communities and poor infrastructure—long distances from listeners’ homes to the radio stations, limited radio frequency coverage, and politicization of radio programs. It’s equally vital for governments to plan for infrastructural developments—especially, the telecommunication infrastructure that would boost community radio’s frequency to cover wider areas compared to the analogue technologies that limit community radio frequency coverage on the airwave spectrum.

In addition, legislative bodies at both national and local levels should adopt a participatory approach in drafting environmental-related policies—especially, involving the youth population in the process so any drafted regulation is a collective responsibility at both ends of the state and the beneficiary communities. Accordingly, Bagnoli and Clark (2010) connote that the use of a participatory approach fosters the ability to explore the lives, relationships and identities of young people over a prospective given period—this helps in ably understanding the everyday lives of the targeted communities. As a result, appropriate and timely regulations would be drafted.

Although greening provides enormous environmental benefits, numerous communities continue to resist the planting of trees (Carmichael & McDonough, 2019). As a result, there is a continued need for governments to invest in greening efforts—such as cities paying for planted trees to boost tree planting within the societies (Bataglia et al., 2014). As observed in their study, Conway and Vander Vecht (2015) apportioned a similar responsibility to non-profit organizations given the

key roles they continuously play in urban and community forestry. That said, African governments should initiate legislative measures that foster both the compliance and contribution of Non-profit organizations to environmental preservation initiatives in the course of their annual related activities.

Conclusively, the Campaign's participatory approach evidences the urgent need for regular data collection and monitoring of the tree planting activities—in line with studies that advocate for the status of the forests in terms of areal extent, distribution, plantation species introductions and biodiversity to be documented to boost a country's response to environmental challenges (Obua et al., 2010).

Points to Ponder

- Given the rate at which corruption tendencies pervade all spheres of life in African economies, sustainable development appears to be a misnomer. More and more studies are needed to dig into the viability of sustainable development faced with this menace.
- Despite its fundamental role in ensuring effective development communication especially in rural setups, the participatory approach is obviously not cheap to realize. Further inquiries become crucial to clearly assess its applicability in community development. Poverty levels and lack of exposure and basic knowledge on sustainable development concept are likely to limit participatory approaches in Africa.
- Given the high poverty levels prevalent in most African economies, can governments afford investment in renewable energy and reduce reliance on fuelwood and wood products? The lack of substitutes for fuelwood and wood products is likely to reverse the aims of many greening campaigns carried out on the African continent.

*Actionable Recommendations**Private Leadership*

Civil Society Organizations should always incorporate participatory approaches in the programs aimed at causing socio-economic change.

Embrace public-private partnerships earmarked to tackle climate change.

On top of profit maximization that is known to be the core intent of private enterprises, private leadership ought to consider environmental conservation as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR).

Prioritize environmental matters in the national budgetary planning.

Offer necessary support in form of equipment and trainings to community radios that permit a more broad-based involvement of the ordinary people in discussions of local matters and finding simple solutions to their problems.

Facilitate and boost awareness about environment conservation policies especially in rural and semi-rural areas that are more vulnerable to environmental degradation.

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